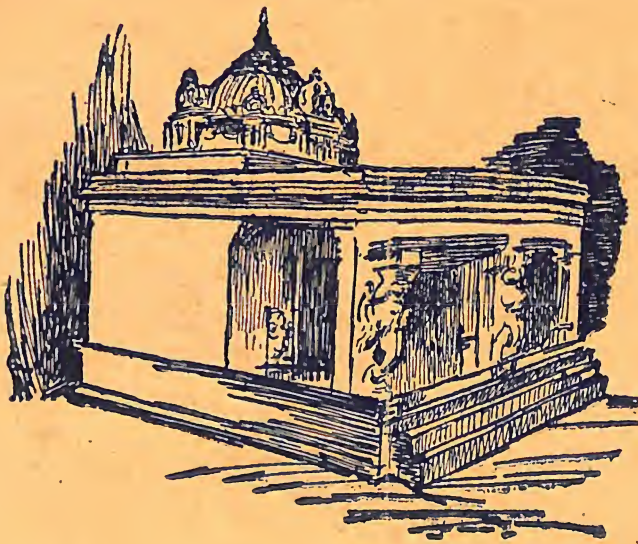


52-2

Sri Sureswara Acharya

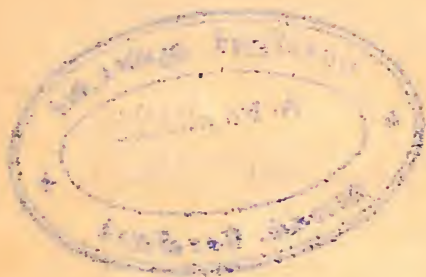


4798

Q1:3329

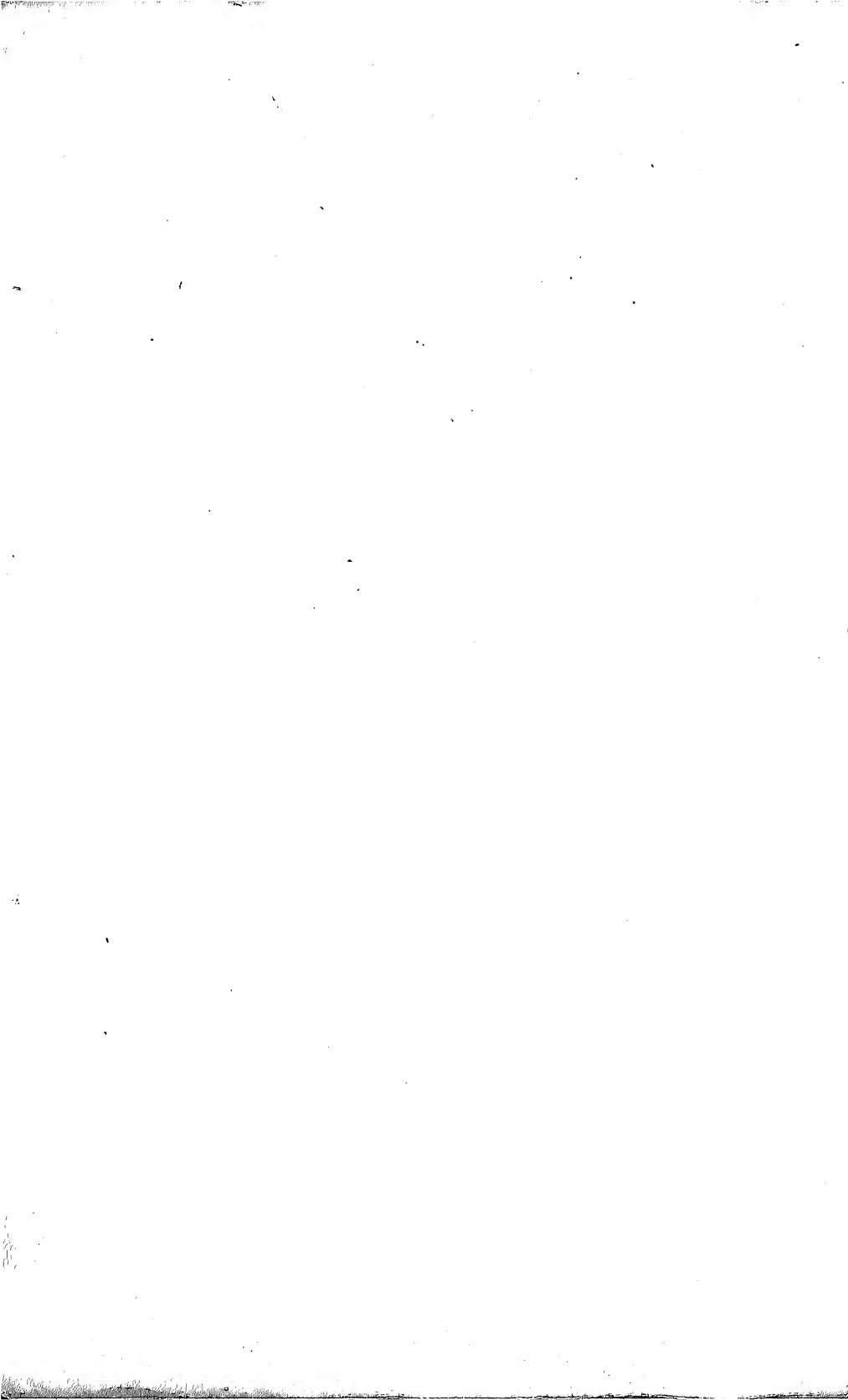
T. RAMALINGESWARA RAO

All rights reserved
Copy right 1970



Rs. 1—50.

Lakshmi Vijayam Press, 2, Pycrofts Road, Madras-5.



52.2
Sri Sureswara Acharya



T. RAMALINGESWARA RAO.

Publishers :

Bharati Grandha Ratnakaram

VIJAYAWADA-2.

All rights reserved

Copy right 1970



Rs. 1—50.

Lakshmi Vijayam Press, 2, Pycrofts Road, Madras-5.



SRI SRINGERI SARADAMBA



Most devotionally laid at the Holy lotus feet of
His Holiness Sri Jagadguru Sankaracharya
SRIMATH ABHINAVA VIDYATHIRTHA
MAHASWAMI
who radiates benevolence from
Sri Sringeri Sarada Peetham
as Pontifex Maximus in an unbroken line of apostolic
succession from
Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada

श्री जगद्गुरु महासंस्थानम्,
श्री शारदापीठम्
शृङ्गेरी-कडूर (मैसूर स्टेट्)

Camp : SRINGERI

Date 8th Jan. 1970

Sri T. Ramalingeswara Rao (well known author in Telugu and English) is an ardent disciple of Sri Sringeri Sarada Peetham. He wrote this book on "Sri Sureswaracharya" who is shining as a beacon light to a line of illustrious successors. This book reveals wide scholarship and deep erudition. Every page of it reflects probing research mingled with sincere and lofty devotion,

Sri C. V. S. Mani Iyer (of 25, Mannar Reddy St., Madras-17) and Sri J. Narayana Murty (Proprietor of Bharati Grandha Ratnakaram, Vijayawada-2) have together met the cost of this publication. It is a good service in the cause of the Math and the money is well spent for a noble cause.

His Holiness Mahasannidhanam Sri Jagadguru Sankaracharya of Sringeri Sarada Peetham with Narayana Smaranams blesses the author Sri Ramalingeswara Rao, Sri C. V. S. Mani Iyer and Sri J Narayanamurty (who are responsible for bringing out this book,) for prosperity happiness and long life.

NOTE BY THE AUTHOR

Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada created new frontiers to Hinduism by establishing the four Amnaya Pithas - the chief of them at Sringeri whose guardian Acharya was Sri Sureswara Acharya. He consolidated the new frontiers and made the name 'Sankara' more than a house hold name. It became part of every sensible Hindu's life, what ever the language he speaks; as the survival of Hinduism was due to the single handed task of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada.

Sri Sureswara Acharya was a personality endowed with a fulness of life. His writings made him a living voice to this day.

This is an attempt to bring between two covers all the available biographical details (as far as possible) of Sri Sureswara Acharya. I thank shree S. P. Thatte (artist of 'Sakal' — Marathi daily, Poona 30) for the drawing on the wrapper which is the new Adhishtanam (temple) on the mortal remains of Sri Sureswara Acharya. I also thank Sri K. R. VenkataRaman for his opinion.

I pray to Sri Sringeri Jagadguru and Sree Sarada Chandra-mouleeswara - the presiding deities of Sri Sringeri Peetha - to shower their choicest blessings on Sri C. V. S. Mani Ayyar (25, Mannar Reddy St., Madras-17) and Sri J. Narayana Murty (proprietor, Bharati Grandha Ratnakaram, Vijayawada-2) as the devotion of these two friends is responsible to see this book in print.

Madras-33. }
7-2-1970 }

T. RAMALINGESWARA RAO.

Guru Bhakta Ratna
K. R. VENKATARAMAN

Madras-28.
Dec. 22, 1969

Retired Director of
Public Instruction and Historical Records officer,
(Pudukottai State)
Formerly member of the Historical Records Commission,
(Govt. of India)

I am glad to have had the opportunity of perusing in manuscript-my friend Sri T. Ramalingeswara Rao's book on Sri Sureswara Acharya. To wide scholarship, Sri Ramalingeswara Rao adds several literary gifts. He is a poet of great merit, novelist and literary critic, and his productions under these heads have won for him quite a remarkable place in the cultural life of Andhra Pradesh. He is equally at home in English as in his mother tongue Telugu. A work from such a scholar deserves to be welcomed.

The present work is the product of research leavened with true bhakti which runs through every page. Here is a Panoramic presentation of the Mimamsaka Mandana, then of Visvarupa the disciple of his great master, of Sureswara the philosopher in his own right, finally of the Jagadguru of the Sarada Pitha at Sringeri; shining as a beacon light to a line of illustrious successors.

Sri Ramalingeswara Rao has rightly dismissed the theory of the identity of Mandana Misra, author of Brahmana Sidhi with Mandana Misra who became Sureswaracharya, with convincing arguments and authorities. Rightly again does he ascribe the authorship of "Sankara Vijaya" to Madhava Mantri, the Governor of Goa and disciple of Kriya Sakti. The problem of Bhavabhuti. Umbeka - Mandana identity bristles with difficulties and merits careful investigation. The other excursions in the book lead us to Vistas that invite further exploration.

It would appear that the author's aim was to take the reader to the heart of the inspiring saga that Sringeri and its Guruparampara from Sankara and Sureswara to Abhimava Vidya Tirtha are, and he has succeeded in it.

K. R. Venkata Raman.

CONTENTS

| | Page No. |
|---|----------|
| 1. Part One (The success of a failure) | 1 |
| 2. Part Two (Variously Called) | 14 |
| 3. Part Three (The Patronymic name) | 21 |
| 4. Part Four (The revelations of history) | 26 |
| 5. Part Five (The glow of the flowing tradition) | 32 |

Cover wrapper illustration is of the new temple (Adhishtana)
on the remains of Sri Sureswara Acharya, at Sringeri.

01/18/1900

VI. 1900

1. 1900

1. 1900

1. 1900

2. 1900

1. 1900

1. 1900

3. 1900

1. 1900

1. 1900

4. 1900

1. 1900

1. 1900

5. 1900

1. 1900

1. 1900

Sri Sureswara Acharya.

(PART ONE)

THE SUCCESS OF A FAILURE.

Philosophical realists describe the Indian Philosophical tradition and development as a series of notes and foot notes to Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada.

The first person to write notes on Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada, or in other words, the person to write the first notes on Sankara Bhagavatpada - is Sri Sureswara Acharya the foremost and most talented disciple of Sri Bhagavatpada, who established four Pithas in the four corners of India - as sentinals of Dharma, and placed Sri Sureswara Acharya as the chief of Sri Sringeri Sarada Pitha in the South, representing the Yajurveda.

At Sringeri - on the banks of the river Tunga - Sri Bhagavatpada carved out a Srichakra on a rock and installed Sri Sarada Devi over it. The Srichakra with Sri Sarada Devi seated over is the holy Shebait Sampradaya - the ever flowing tide of tradition. Sri Bhagavatpada gave a Sphatika Linga - (Chandramouleeswara which is supposed to have been brought from Kailasa) and a murti of Ganapati (Ratnagarbha) to his disciple Sri Sureswara Acharya, the first pontiff of Sri Sringeri Sarada Pitha. As Dr. Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Ayyar wrote "It is the glory of the Sringeri Sarada Pitha that from the time of its foundation by Adi Sankara it has had a continuous and uninterrupted series of occupants who, however different in their personal history and in their intellectual calibre, have all along maintained their spiritual purity and contributed to the continuous inspiration of Sringeri as an exemplar and model of devotion and self surrender."

Though Sri Sureswara Acharya was a disciple of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada, the fact remains that the disciple is more aged

than the preceptor, contrary to the normal age relation that exist between a preceptor and his disciple. The relation between Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada and Sri Sureswara Acharya was unique. In his character Sri Sureswara Acharya combined the extreme humility of a disciple belonging to the ancient Indian spiritual tradition and the robust independence of a free thinker.

The contribution of Sri Sureswara Acharya to the development of Advaita Sidhanta has been considerable, especially after the disappearance of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada.

It is an interesting fact that Sri Sureswara Acharya (then known as Mandana Misra) became a disciple to Sri Bhagavatpada after a defeat in a polymical combat of wits. The combat resulted in an abysmal failure on the part of Sri Sureswara Acharya (then known as Mandana Misra) and it became an example of a successful failure. He took the defeat in all humility, entered into the spirit of the doctrine of the Victor, and became a most sincere and true disciple - thereby showing - 'a gift of humility, of understanding, of detachment, of rising above the grey desert of prejudice, in short, of being an ideal ascetic and ideal disciple to an ideal preceptor'

The influence which emanated from the personality of Sri Sureswara Acharya was ineffable like music and beauty. Its claim upon others was great because of its revelation of a spontaneous self giving, humility and detachment. This is the reason why the Sringeri Sarada Pitha at which he presided, gathered on ever-growing and climaxing loyalty of the most loftiest kind. Lucid simplicity was the essence of his life at Sringeri where he lived for a pretty long period.

Sri Bhagavatpada stayed at Sringeri for about twelve years - 'where he sat was a temple and 'where he walked was a hallowed ground'. Sri Sureswara Acharya is supposed to have lived to ripe old age.

The few details of the life of Sri Sureswara Acharya now available, do not make a full story. For all the revelation and

anecdotes, at the end we are left with insufficient material to appreciate a full life personal story. It is difficult to bring out in all its vividness the richness and variety in the life of Sri Sureswara Acharya and his experience.

Lives of great men have always been the best commentaries of their teachings. They appear with a specific mission to fulfill and a message to deliver for the redemption of mankind.

The times so often make the man, not the men the times. The times gave a suitable and most ardent and sincere disciple to Sri Bhagavatpada to guard the Vedic Dharma after his disappearance. This true disciple surpassed his own limitations and possessed that essence which makes men endure the accidents and threats of existence and still keep upright.

Even before becoming a disciple to Sri Bhagavatpada he was in the centre of things in the world of Vedic and traditional scholarship of his times. It is however not the revelation of his great scholarship that gave him a place among the Immortals, but the great challenge he faced, the course he opted - of flowing generosity and atonement, realisation of the logic of his unreasonableness, and the prophetic understanding he displayed - that made him great as a person and as a type.

The name of Sri Sureswara Acharya stands as the champion who kept the tradition of Bhagavatpada flowing. In understanding the importance of tradition, the Bergsonian distinction between 'open' and 'closed' ways of thought should be kept in mind. An open tradition is a spiritual heritage which is a valid view and way of life. But a closed tradition is stagnation. The Hindu tradition is a wholly open tradition - a repository of the funded values of the past.

Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada completed the Bhashya commentaries while he stayed at Varanasi and then started on a march of conquest. Sri Bhagavatpada heard of Sri Kumarila Bhatta, a great scholar of Poorva Mimamsa.

Kumarila Bhatta was the author of commentaries on "Jaimini Sūtras" of Poorva Mimamsa. He was the originator of "Bhatta Mata" one of the two different schools of Poorva Mimamsa. Kumarila Bhatta was an Andhra Scholar (according to Jain Scriptures) of Jayamangala village in the Northern part of Andhra bordering Utkala country or the modern Orissa. This Jayamangala village is now claimed to belong to Karimnagar District of the Andhra Pradesh. Yagneswara was the father of Kumarila Bhatta and his mother was Chandraguna.

A knowledge of South Indian languages is revealing in the commentaries of Kumarila Bhatta.

Poorva Mimamsa along with Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta, is only the direct continuation of the Vedic culture. While Nyaya and Vaiseshika schools of Indian philosophy are extremely practical in view, the Sankhya and the Yoga Schools lay stress on the mental aspect. The two systems of Mimamsa (Poorva and Uttara) schools speak about the spiritual aspect.

The Vedic tradition is continued in the two Mimamsa Schools. The Poorva Mimamsa system took the ritualistic tradition of the Vedic culture. It helped a methodical interpretation of the otherwise complicated Vedic injunctions about rituals. It helped easy understanding and a harmony in practice. It also supplied a philosophical justification of the beliefs which formed the source and the authority for the rituals. The avowed aim of this system is to examine the nature of Dharma. In a way this system is perhaps more practical than speculative.

Dr. Radhakrishnan writes that "its importance for the Hindu Religion is great. The scriptures which govern the daily life of the Hindu require to be interpreted in accordance with the rules of Mimamsa. Modern Hindu code is considerably influenced by the Mimamsa system".

The Poorva Mimamsa Sūtras are attributed to Jaimini whose date is placed differently by different scholars. There is a view

which assumes that this system developed as a scientific system before the Vedanta.

Sabara Swami is the chief commentator on the work of Jaimini. He is believed to have lived in the first century B. C.

The Bhashya of Sabara swami was later developed in two different ways, one by Prabhakara (called Prabhakaram, or the Prabhakara Mata) and another by Kumarila Bhatta (called the Bhaattam or the Bhatta Mata).

To the glory of Hinduism, the Poorva Mimamsa contributed much with its daring arguments, fearless admissions, and firm inferences. Max Mueller observed that neither Plato nor Kant would have felt much wiser for the contents of this school of Indian philosophy.

The Poorva Mimamsa faith underlying Vedic ritualism consists of different elements such as belief in the existence of a soul which survived death and enjoys the fruits of ritual in heaven, and also the belief in some power of potency which preserves the efforts of the rituals performed along with belief in the infallibility of the Vedas on which rituals stand. There is also the belief that the world is real and that our life and actions performed here are not mere dreams. Sir John Woodroffe described ritual as an art—the art of religion. According to Woodroffe, art is the outward material expression of ideas intellectually held, and emotionally felt. Ritual art is concerned with expression of those ideas and feelings which are specially called religious.

Heaven is regarded as the usual end of rituals. Liberation is desirable not because of its blissfulness but due to cessation of painful experience. This conception of soul in Poorva Mimamsa system is more or less similar to the other realistic and pluralistic schools, such as Nyaya and Vaiseshika. The soul for them is however an infinite substance.

The authoritativeness of Vedic injunctions is derived, according to the Poorva Mimamsa School - from the fact that they deal with objects beyond the reach of experience of man or divinity. There

is no room for a God for whom the Poorva Mimamsa School has no use as the author of the periodical manifestation and dissolution of universe. Poorva Mimamsa School of philosophy could not believe in God whose authority would be superior or on a par with that of the Vedas.

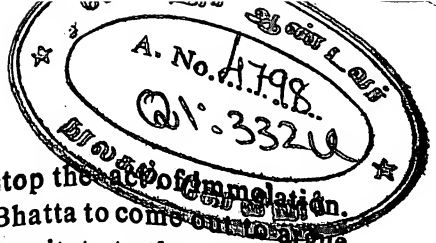
The unity of the Poorva Mimamsa School of philosophy suffered after Sabara Swami. Kumarila Bhatta and Prabhakara headed the two branches. Kumarila Bhatta's commentary is full of hairsplitting learning and acuteness. In the view of western orientalists, his commentary shows a richer, more vivid and elaborated style.

The differences between the two schools are materially important for an understanding and appreciation of the development of this school of philosophy.

Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada heard of this Kumarila Bhatta - the leader of one of the two branches of the Poorva Mimamsa School of philosophy. Kumarila Bhatta's acceptance of the Vedic authority was great, but he did not care to admit the existence of God. The great powers of argument of Kumarila Bhatta and the stories of his miraculous deeds in vanquishing well-known Budhistic scholars in intellectual logic to reestablish the authority of the Vedas - were almost known to everybody in the land. According to Kumarila Bhatta, the Vedas are eternal like the world.

When Sri Bhagavatpada heard of Kumarila Bhatta, he was immolating himself in the fire of burning paddy husk as an act of expiation for the supposed sin of having defeated the Budhistic teachers under whom he studied earlier to fathom the vulnerability of their logic.

Sri Bhagavatpada hastened to meet Kumarila Bhatta who was doing the last act of immolation at Prayaga the mystic spot of confluence of the three divine Indian rivers, the Ganga, the Yamuna, and the Saraswati. When Sri Bhagavatpada arrived at the spot, Kumarila Bhatta was already half burnt. Bhatta made obeisance with folded hands. Sri Bhagavatpada asked the great



Vedic scholar, Kumarila Bhatta, to stop the act of immolation. Sri Bhagavatpada also asked Kumarila Bhatta to come and argue with him because the Poorva Mimamsa attitude to the existence of God was not correct even according to the authority of the Vedas which the Poorva Mimamsa Scholars accept as supreme.

Kumarila Bhatta, the advocate of Vedic rituals, explained to Sri Bhagavatpada, that the lower part of his body was already consumed by the fire - that it was therefore not possible to stop the immolation in part. He also explained that in deference to Vedic injunctions, for which the mission of his life was devoted, the act of immolation should not be stopped in the middle as he had to purify himself according to his own convictions, because his own doctrine was not a dogma, but a working hypothesis of human conduct, adopted to the conditions of his life.

Kumarila Bhatta recognised the great merit of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada at the very first sight. He offered his salutations with folded hands, and but for his act of immolation, he said, he would have composed a metrical commentary (Vartika) on the Bhashya of Sri Bhagavatpada. Kumarila Bhatta readily accepted the doctrine of Advaita, the existence of God, and the relationship between man and God as proclaimed by Sri Bhagavatpada. Kumarila Bhatta however requested Sri Bhagavatpada to go to Mahishmatipura to meet his pet disciple 'Mandana Misra' to win him over to Advaita, because the Vedic scholarship of Mandana Misra was most suitable for writing a Vartika to the Bhashya of Sri Bhagavatpada. He also added that the superiority of the Advaita doctrine will be revealed to the world if Mandana Misra gets defeated in a combat of logic.

Kumarila Bhatta described Mandana Misra - as the dearest of his disciples, and as a great scholar in all branches of learning. The defeat of Mandana Misra would mean the defeat of Poorva Mimamsa scholarship.

Sri Bhagavatpada blessed Kumarila Bhatta who continued his act of immolation to its end. The advice of Kumarila Bhatta was wound and it was accepted by Sri Bhagavatpada.

Contrary to the normal occurrence of a disciple seeking a guru to earn his benevolent grace by devotional loyalty and service, Sri Bhagavatpada went to Mahishmatipura (vide foot note) in search of a prospective disciple.

The Magadha empire with Pataliputra as its capital, stretched far and wide in those days. Mahishmatipura was an important town in the extensive Magadhan empire. The city was beautiful, equal to Amaravati - the abode of Indra. The storeyed buildings of the city were high and they were hiding the sky from the view of a pedestrian.

Mandana Misra was an ornament to any circle of scholars-always surrounded by a thousand disciples of his own, learning from him various branches of knowledge under Gurukula System.

There are two opinions regarding the modern location of Mahishmatipura.

Some historians identify it with the modern town of Maheswar (Choli-Maheswar) in the state of Madhya Pradesh. It is on the north bank of River Narmada near the point where tributary river Mahishmati joins it. It is about 50 K. M from Mhow railway station on Indore Khandwa section of the Ajmir-Khandwa metre guage line. The trunk Road between Bombay and Delhi (Via Indore and Gwalior) crosses the River Narmada only about 10 K. M. away from Maheswar. There is a Rajarajeswari temple in the Town. Two Siva temples (Kaleswara and Jwaleswara) are on the sides of the confluence point. The Ashrama of Matanga Mahamuni is supposed to have existed on the Western outskirts of the town. It is also called Gupta Kasi as it is equal to Kasi in sacredness. Omkareswar, the holy place where Sri Bhagavatpada had the darsan of the Adwaita Preceptor is only a few miles away from this town.

There is another school which claims that 'Mahishi' a modern town in the Mithila region of Bihar-as the old Mahishmatipura. It is in the Saharsa district. Some 'Misra' families in the town claim geneological relationship with Mandana Misra. It is on the Ganga Kosi plains - not far from the Nepal border. A near by town is shown to have been the seat of the Gurukula of Kumarila Bhatta. This town was in Magadha Kingdom during the times of Mandana Misra s menti. ned in Guruvamsa Kavya. The other town Maheswar was outside Magadha Kingdom at that time.

More historians appear to be in favour of the Mithila region. But the old name of the place (where ever it might have been) is undoubtedly 'Mahishmatipura.'

Sri Bhagavatpada reached the city of Mahishmatipura with his followers. The passers by in the street gave him a graphic description of the palace of Mandana Misra. There was little or no difficulty in finding out the mansion.

It was like a Royal Palace because Mandana Misra was in great affluence. His father Hima mitra was an honoured pandit in the court of the Kashmir kings. He belonged to Kannauj Gowda Brahmin Community. Mandana Misra who received the best of traditional training in scholarship sat at the feet of Kumarila Bhatta and perfected his scholarship. He settled at Mahishmatipura as a house holder with his wife Ubhaya Bharati. She was the daughter of a learned and pious man, Vishnu Mitra by name, living on the banks of Sonabhadra river.

Mandana Misra and Ubhaya Bharati were an ideal couple-each of them equal to the other in all branches of learning, ethical character and strict observation of Vedic injunctions.

Ubhaya Bharati was supposed to be an avatara of Goddess of learning, Saraswati Devi - as Mandana Misra was supposed as the avatara of Brahma.

His scholarship and the reverence in which he was held by everybody were so great - that the honorific epithet "Mandana Misra" came into universal usage eclipsing his real name which is almost lost in the past columns of time.

The royal mansion of Mandana Misra had a few cages of parrots hanging in the frontage. As the parrots were daily hearing the teachings of Mandana Misra to his thousand disciples in various branches of learning, the parrots themselves became erudite. The caged parrots were discussing among themselves about the authority of the Vedas - that they are self authoritative, that their authority is unquestionable and supreme, that they were not inspired by any other source, human or divine; that the world is eternal like the Vedas and not transient; that the fruits of actions follow an autonomous law of Karma and has no use for God for fruition.

When Sri Bhagavatpada reached the mansion of Mandana Misra, it was found bolted from inside. Sri Bhagavatpada, as a Sanyasi, had no right of admission into a house found closed on approach - according to the rule of Smriti which governs the daily conduct of traditional Sanyasis.

Sri Bhagavatpada pondered a little. He was fully decided to redeem Mandana Misra from the rigidity of dogmatic ritualism. Therefore he felt like using his extraordinary Yogic Powers on the occasion. Great Yogi and Sidha Purusha as he was, Sri Bhagavatpada entered the house through the bolted and closed door.

Mandana Misra had an innate dislike for Sanyasis because in his staunch belief of ritualism, he felt that only those who wish to escape the vigours of Vedic injunctions found a refuge in the Sanyasa Asrama. He was therefore sure that a Sanyasi would be an undependable escapist who failed in his duty to the Veda and its authoritative ritualistic injunctions. He therefore abhorred even the sight of a Sanyasi.

Moreover when Sri Bhagavatpada entered the house, it was a time when the presence of a Sanyasi was most unwelcome. Mandana Misra was performing a Shraddha and the Bhokta Brahmins were about to be fed. The entry of Sri Bhagavatpada at such a time caused disturbance and Mandana Misra was infuriated.

Hot and harsh exchanges and repartees followed. The Bhokta Brahmins found that the situation was developing into an unwanted climax and wished to set it right. They suggested to Mandana Misra to invite Sri Bhagavatpada to participate in the Shraddha by occupying Vishnu Sthana. Staunch ritualist as he was, Mandana Misra was fully bent upon saving the ritual and to see it to its normal end. He invited Sri Bhagavatpada accordingly.

But Sri Bhāgavatpada declined to accept the invitation, and explained to Mandana Misra that he did not come for Bhiksha but for a polemical disputation. Mandana Misra who never met

his equal in traditional learning was itching for a polemical combat and gladly welcomed it.

The Shraddha was allowed to be finished as ordained and the disputation was fixed for the next day.

They met the next day after daily ablutions normal to their respective Asrams. Ubhaya Bharati, the wife of Mandana Misra agreed to serve as the umpire as they both sought her help after expressing confidence in her impartiality and appreciation for her wisdom and scholarship. She was the only Scholar available who could follow the disputants in their flight to sublime heights.

As Ubhaya Bharati was a house-wife, with her daily manifold house-hold duties to attend, including the preparation of daily food to the two disputants, she gave them each a garland of flowers and said that the person whose garland faded away first was the person vanquished in the contest. To make the dispute more purposeful, they agreed to a bet that the person worsted should become the disciple of the other and accept the Ashrama - way of life - of the victor.

They were giants of erudition - both of them supreme in the knowledge of the Vedas. The discussion continued from day to day without hindrance to their daily religious duties, needed rest and other exigencies.

At the end of discussion each day, Ubhaya Bharati called her husband in for attending to their rituals of a house-holder. They were both doing Bhiksha Vandana to Sri Bhagavatpada.

From day to day, Mandana Misra saw new light in the arguments of Sri Bhagavatpada. He was slowly losing faith in his own erstwhile convictions while his faith in the stand point of Sri Bhagavatpada was growing to a stimulating climax.

On the eighth and the last day of the discussion, Mandana Misra was fully convinced of the superiority of the doctrine of Sri Bhagavatpada. As Sri Bhagavatpada said-"once the conditioning factors - (the nescience) vanish into disappearance- the soul

becomes one and identical with the Brahman". When Mandana Misra realised the limitations of his own stand-point - and the unlimited truth of Sri Bhagavatpada's view, found his flower garland faded and dull. He fell prostrate before Sri Bhagavatpada, touched his feet and said in a trembling voice "Oh ! Teacher of the world ! Pardon me and my audacity. I have offended thee for these eight days. Hide thy fury, Oh ! Jagadguru ! and shower thy benevolent grace on this humble servant of yours".

As Mandana Misra saw the smiling face of Sri Bhagavatpada - he recognised a beauty of unknown charm and felt lifted from bars of consciousness to a state of endless Reality - into which all values get transvaluated.

Before Mandana Misra recovered from this trans experience of the ecstatic joy, his voice was rendering the praise of the Supreme teacher in an unsurpassed melody while all life vibrated in love in that divine melody.

Ubhaya Bharati came out from the kitchen, fell prostrate before the new disciple and the Teacher of the world - offering Bhiksha Vandana to both of them.

Mandana Misra slowly recovered from the trance as his senses were awakened to outer life. He saw the divine form of the Jagadguru as an enveloped Effulgence of grandeur. He fell before him once again and invoked peace.

Ubhaya Bharati disappeared from mortal vision regaining her celestial form - the Goddess of knowledge - Saraswathi - as she was. She however granted a boon to Sri Bhagavatpada that She would be immanent at a place where he may invoke her presence. Mandana Misra gave all his earthly belongings to the needy at the last Vedic ritual which he performed before he was granted Sanyasa Ashrama by Sri Jagadguru Sankara Bhagavatpada.

The story of the taking of Sanyasa Ashrama by Sri Sureswara Acharya is a story not only of a clash between ritual and spiritual values but of how a man reaches detachment and divinity ; and

how Sri Sureswara Acharya passed through vicissitudes of logic and life in order to be ready for anything higher.

It looks as though Sri Sureswara Acharya did not consciously rise above earthly ties. As the polemic combat progressed, he was progressively bereft of them. The isolation of his stand point, and the consequent disillusionment with the ritualistic school were transmuted into detachment and then he passed beyond passion and its ties. He became fit for 'Enlightenment' which came from the benevolent grace of the 'Teacher of the world'.



(Part Two)

VARIOUSLY CALLED.

Sri Bhagavatpada gave his new disciple the name of 'Sri Sureswara Acharya' in the Sanyasa Ashrama and took the disciple with him on his march from place to place declaring only the spiritual reality as real while all else has to be transcended and related to this reality which is Infinite awareness characterised by bliss.

Soon Sri Bhagavatpada reached Sringeri where he invoked the presence of Goddess of knowledge - as Sri Sarada Devi installed on the banks of Tunga River.

The first Acharya of Sri Sringeri Sarada Pitha, Sri Sureswara Acharya - wrote elucidating metrical commentaries (Vartikas) on the Taittiriya and Brihadaranya upanishadic Bhashya of Sri Bhagavatpada. Sri Sureswara Acharya also wrote commentaries on the Dakshinamoorti stotra and Panchikaranam of Sri Bhagavatpada. The commentary on Dakshinamoorti Stotra became famous as the Manasollasa commentary. He also wrote a succinct monograph presenting an analytical picture of the fundamental teachings of Sri Bhagavatpada. This book became well-known as "Naishkarma Sidhi". Sri Sureswara Acharya also wrote a commentary called 'Balakrida' on the smriti of Yagnavalkya.

It is significant that Sri Sureswara Acharya, the pontiff of Sringeri Sarada Pitha (representing Yajurveda) has written vartika commentaries only on two upanishad Bhashyas of Sri Bhagavatpada. His vartikas relate to Brihadaranya and Taittiriya upanishads which belong to the two divisions of Yajurveda - the Sukla and Krishna respectively. Of the ten important upanishads, there are two more, the Isa (of Sukla) and the Katha (कठ) (of Krishna) that also relate to the Yajurveda. But the traditional opinion is that the Isa upanishad is only a supplementary to the Brihadaranya. The contents of the two upanishads justify this opinion. The Katha upanishad is part of Kaathaka (काठक) Brahmana which is

Itself a part of Taithiriya Brahmana, and the Taithiriya upanishad is the most important upanishad of this Brahmana.

Yajurveda has much to do with the ritualistic performances which very much concern the Poorva Mimamsa School of philosophy. Sri Sureswara Acharya was the greatest scholar of Poorva Mimamsa philosophy during his times.

Like that of Sri Bhagavatpada, the writing style of Sri Sureswara Acharya is also exquisitely simple but penetrating. As author of Vartikas, Sri Sureswara Acharya earned the name 'Vartikakara'. His understanding of the doctrine of Advaita is unquestionable and superb. It is a shining example of the thinkers saying "our dignity is not in that we do, but what we understand".

'Mandana Misra' was not a name but an epithet of great respect. There were other Scholars - his contemporaries - to whom also people applied this impressive epithet. In fact Sri Bhagavatpada on his way from Kumarila Bhatta to Mahishmatipura in Magadhan empire met one Mandana Misra, - a Scholar of Jaiminiya Bhashya. This Scholar had some discussion with Sri Bhagavatpada and sought his blessings for liberation. Sri Bhagavatpada blessed him and later went to Mahishmatipura to meet another Mandana Misra whom he defeated to make Sri Sureswara Acharya. The first Mandana Misra whom Sri Bhagavatpada met on his way was a house-holder - grihasta - the author of Brahmasiddhi - which was undoubtedly written after a perusal of Brahma Sutra Bhashya of Sri Bhagavatpada. The other Mandana Misra defeated by Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada became a Sanyasi and passed away as Sri Sureswara Acharya - who appears to have written his Naishkarma Siddhi purposefully as an effective rejoinder to the points of difference between the view points of Brahma Siddhi and Sri Bhagavatpada.

Before Sri Sureswara Acharya became a Sanyasi - his name was supposed to be Viswarupa as mentioned by some scholars. But in fact the two names Sri Viswarupa Acharya and Sri Sureswara Acharya were applied to him even after Sanyasa without any difference being made between the two applications. One of these

two names appears to be the name given to him at the time of Sanyasa and the other again an epithet of respect or title - which common people and scholars alike used as a word of reference to him.

There is however no doubt that these two names applied to the same person.

There are innumerable ancient texts and commentaries which hold Sri Sureswara Acharya and Sri Viswarupa Acharya as one and the same person.

There are several Sankara Vijaya Kavyas now available in the field. Almost all of them, the Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya, the Sadananda Sankara Vijaya, Govindanatha Sankara Vijaya, Vyasachala Sankara Vijaya, and Sankarabhyudaya of Rajachudamani Dikshita, the Keraliya Sankara Vijaya (Govindanatha) (also called Sankaracharya Charitra) in all these books, Sri Sureswara Acharya has been referred to as Sri Viswarupa.

Madhavacharya (son of Mayana) was an ornament of the Mimamsa Sastra and he performed Soma sacrifice during the spring season of every year (Partivasanta Somayaji). He claimed Vidya Tirtha and Bharati Tirtha as his preceptors. In one of his books, commentary on Parasara smriti, he referred to Viswarupacharya. (Parasara Madhaviya Vol. I Page 57) It says "Viswarupacharya quoted this sentence in his Vartika commentary about Nityakarma thus ---". But the passage quoted as belonging to Viswarupacharya happens to be sloka 57 of Sri Sureswara Acharya's Brihadaranyaka Vartika.

इदं च वाक्यं नित्यकर्मविषयत्वेन वार्त्तिके विश्वरूपाचार्यः उदाजहारः "आन्ने फलार्थं इत्यादि ह्यापस्तम्ब स्मृतेर्वचः । फलवत्त्वं समाचष्टे नित्यानामपि कर्मणाय ॥ इति ॥

Of the many works of Sri Vidyaranya Swami, Vivarana Prameya Sangraha is an important one, in which a reference to Viswarupacharya occurs at page 92.

तत्तारतम्यं च तदेतत् प्रेयः पुत्रात् इत्यस्याः श्रुतेः व्याख्यानावसरे विश्वरूपाचार्यैः दर्शितम् । विज्ञात् पुत्रः पुत्रात् पिण्डः पिण्डात् तथेन्द्रिय इन्द्रियेभ्यः प्रियः प्राणः प्राणात् आत्मा परः प्रियः ॥ इति ।

“Viswarupacharya pointed out this gradation while commenting on the Sruti text - “This is dearer than the son” - thus.

Here again the passage quoted is only sloka 1029 from Brihadarany Vartika II (4) of Sri Sureswara Acharya.

Sri Vidyananya Swami made another reference to Sri Viswarupa Acharya in another book ‘Jivan Mukti Viveka’ (Page 46).

“तदाहुः विश्वरूपाचार्याः—“शुभैराप्नोति देवत्वं निषिद्धैर्नार्क्यं गतिम् । जन्माभ्यां पुण्यपाशभ्यां मानुष्यं लभतेऽवशः ॥

“Viswarupacharya says like this’ - and then a passage from the well-known Naishkarma Siddhi of Sri Sureswara Acharya has been quoted.

Samkarananda was a disciple of Sri Vidya Tirtha Swami and also considered as a Vidya guru of Sri Vidyananya Swami. Samkarananda wrote many books which are accepted as authorities in post Samkara Advaitic development. Of his works, the Atmapurana (also known as Upanishadratna), Vrittis on twenty seven Upanishads, (including the major Upanishads) a gloss on the Bhagavat-gita (called Gita Tatparya Bodhini) and a dipika on Brahmasutra are held in high esteem. In his Taittiriya Upanishad Vritti, Samkarananda made a reference to Viswarupacharya.

वक्ष्येऽधुना शंकरविश्वरूपवाचा विनिर्णीतसमस्तवाक्यम् ।
कृष्णं यजुस्तित्तिरिनामचिह्नं पदार्थं शुद्धयर्थमतीव सार्थम् ॥

Translated it means “I shall now give the meaning and the significance of Krishna Yajur Taittiriya Upanishad from which sentences have all been clearly expounded by the words of Sri Samkara and Sri Viswarupa”.

The reference is to the Samkara Bhashya and the Upanishadic Vartika of Sri Sureswara Acharya.

The Guru Parampara of Puri Govardhana Math established by Sri Samkara Bhagavatpada made a mention of several disciples of Sri Bhagavatpada. Four royal disciples, twelve ordinary disciples, and four Jagadguru Pithadhipati Sishyas were mentioned. These four Jagadguru Sishyas are mentioned thus ;

पञ्चपादादिकर्तारं पञ्चपादं सनन्दनम् ।
 वार्त्तिकादिग्रन्थकारं विश्वरूपं सुरेश्वरम् ।
 पृथ्वीधराख्यं श्रीमन्तं हस्तामलकयोगिनम् ।
 तोटकं चानन्दगिरिं प्रणमामि जगद्गुरुन् ॥

Translated it means--

" I bow down to the Jagadgurus Sri Padmapada (also known as Sanandana), the author of Panchapadika etc ; Viswarupa (also known as Sri Sureswara Acharya), the author of Vartikas etc ; Hastamalaka(also known as Prithvidhara) and Totaka (also known as Anandagiri).

There has been much controversy about a copper plate grant supposed to have been issued by King Sudhama of a region in Ghurjara Desa or modern Gujarat. The copper plate grant confirms the identity of Sri Viswarupa Acharya with Sri Sureswara Acharya.

"विश्वरूपापरनाम सुरेश्वराचार्यान्—"

In this copper plate, the name of Hastamalaka was also identified as Prithvidhara.

From the Guru Parampara Stotra of Puri Govardhana Math, it appears that each of the four Jagadguru Sishyas of Sri Bhagavatpada apart their asrama names-also had popularly known epithets of respect - or titles. For instance, Padmapada was an epithet for Sanandana, Hastamalaka for Prithvidhara, Totaka for Anandagiri. Similarly Sri Viswarupa Acharya appears to have earned the respectable epithet "Sri Sureswara Acharya".

The 'Manasollasa' is a commentary of Sri Sureswara Acharya on the Dakshinamoorti Stotra of Sri Bhagavatpada - subsequently commented upon by many scholars. One of them was by Rama Tirtha. He wrote :-

तच्छिष्यैः विश्वरूपाचार्यैः सुरेश्वरापरनामभिः तत्पद्यन्धार्थतत्त्वं
तात्पर्यतो मानसोल्लासनाम्ना वार्तिकात्मना ग्रन्थ संदर्भेण आविष्कृतम् ।

Translated the passage means :—

His (Samkara Bhagavatpada's) disciple Sri Viswarupacharya also known as Sri Sureswaracharya has brought out the substance of that poem very well in his commentary (Vartika) called Manasollasa.

Sri Sureswara Acharya's commentary on Yagnavalkya Smriti is called Balakrida. This became a standard commentary in the course of time and Scholars of later times wrote their commentaries to further elucidate the points made out in Balakrida.

Vachanamala was a commentary on Balakrida. The Vachanamala commentary was edited by Mahamahopadhyaya Sri T. Ganapati Sastry. This commentary begins with an invocation thus :—

अवनम्य मनुसुरेश्वरयोगीश्वरतीव्रकिरणगुरुचरणान् । शास्त्राणां
व्याकर्तृन् कर्तृन्पि देवता निखिलाः ।

Translated it means :—

"In reverence making a bow to all the Devas, and to the authors and to the commentators of the Sastras-Manu, Sureswara and Yogiswara Yagnavalkya the disciple of the God of Sun".

There are several other commentaries on Balakrida of Sri Sureswara Acharya. One of the earlier commentaries was 'Vibhavana'. Its author was Vedanta Yatiswara. The invocation sloka of this commentary runs :—

यत्प्रसादाद्यं लोको धर्ममार्गस्थितः सुखी ।
भवभूतिसुरेशख्यं विश्वरूपं प्रणम्य तम् ॥

On translation this sloka means :—

"In reverence bowing down to Viswarupa also known as Sureswara and Bhavabhuti on account of whose blessings this world became happy and was placed on the path of Dharma".

This sloka placed a new element in the matter. It obviously means that Sri Sureswara Acharya was identical with Viswarupa Acharya who was no other than Bhavabhuti.

'Bhavabhuti' is a title which means the grace of "Siva" indicative of the author's devotion to Siva. The special devotion of Sri Sureswara Acharya to Siva is clearly established by the opening slokas of Balakrida as also the general spirit and trend of the Manosollasa Vartika.

It may also be said that the word 'Bhavabhuti' might mean the great Sanskrit poet known by that name - a name which was however a title or an epithet of respect.

It has also been reported by Scholars that some North Indian manuscript copies of Naishkarma Siddhi were having colophons reading that Viswarupa wrote the work.

The name Sri Viswarupa Acharya seems to be the correct Sanyasa name and the name Sri Sureswara Acharya looks like a title - or an epithet of respect, as declared by some tradition. This view is supported by the Sringeri Guru Parampara Stotra in which Viswarupa is mentioned as Sanyasa name (Viswam cha Yatswarupam.)



(PART THREE)

THE PATRONYMIC NAME

Sri Sureswara Acharya, is the name earned after **Sanyasa** or an epithet of respect as has been pointed out.

Again 'Mandana Misra' was also not a name but a title indicative of high scholarship.

Another name **Sri Viswarupa Acharya** also does not seem to be the original name before **Sanyasa**. The other name (**Bhava-bhuti**) neither seems to be the one given to him by his parents.

It is a common knowledge in history that many great persons have lost their patronymic names under the piling column of time and unexpected new names got stuck up to them. Sometimes such new names may be the surnames, nicknames, or pseudonyms.

Perhaps many common students of history are not aware that the real name of the great Moghul emperor Akbar happens to be Mohammed Jalaluddin. A great Sanskrit poet Govindaraja wrote a farce in which the name of the chief character temptress was Vikatanitamba. Curiously the name of the poet is not remembered and he came to be known in the history of Sanskrit Literature as Vikatanitamba.

It is not a surprise that a host of other great poets and scholars in the world of Sanskrit letters are known by their Pseudonyms. Many historians believe that 'Kalidasa', 'Bharavi', and as a matter of that 'Bhavabhuti' — are only pseudonyms - their real names having been lost due to the corrosion of tides of time, despite their poetic genius and great scholarship.

An inquiry to find out the correct patronymic name of **Sri Sureswara Acharya** appears to be easy and smooth if we start with the name 'Bhavabhuti' more well known in the world of letters.

Going through the pages of 'Malatimadhava' an important drama of Bhavabhuti, we find a good lot of praise in the prologue showered on the Sastric schoiarship of the author. Such a praise of Sastric scholarship in a purely literary work is not unusual although a precedent is not easily forth coming. However, it does not seem unwarranted. There is again another well-known sloka which acquired popular eminence. In that sloka the poet consoled himself against likely Indifference to his works during his own times.

Is there any justification for the claims of the poet to Sastric scholarship? Many well-known scholars made deep studies to investigate these claims.

Scholars have found (the editor of Goudavadha) some manuscript copies of the Malati Madhava drama with colophones in which Umbeka, the pupil of Kumarila Bhatta, is spoken of as the author of the drama.

Chitsukha a prolific Advaita writer of 10th century was a disciple of Sri Jagadguru Jnanottama Siva Acharya of Sringeri Saradapitha. This Jagadguru is fifth on the Sringeri Pitha counted from Sri Bhagavatpada.

Chitsukha wrote a number of books on Advaita which occupy an important place in the development of Advaita tradition in the post - Sankara period. Chitsukha appears to have lived near SImhachala of modern Visakhapatnam district.

'Tattvapradipika' generally called 'Chitsukhi' is most important of the works of Chitsukha. The other works are Bhavadyotanika (Vivarana tatparya dipika) Brahma Sutra Bhashya tika (Bhava Prakasika) Adhikaranamanjari, Adikarana Sangati, and commentaries on Brahma Siddhi and Naishkarmasidhi Pramanamala tika and Vedanta Siddhanta Karikamanjari.

In Tattva Pradipika (page 265) Chitsukha referred to the author of the Sanskrit drama 'Malati Madhavam' as an Apta. It has been pointed out by commentators of Chitsukha that the reference made by Chitsukha was to Umbeka who is no other

person than Bhayabhuti. (M. R. Telang in introduction to *Mahavidya Vidambana*). 'Apta' in Indian epistemology, means an Acharya who wrote authoritative works in *Mimamsa sastra*.

Yuktisuchaprapurani is a commentary by Somanatha on *Sastradipika* of Parthasaradhi Misra of Midhila. This commentator frequently quoted Umbeka for his opinions on 'Chodana' and 'outpathica Sutras' (pp. 3, 38, 82, & 135, etc.) while explaining the views of Parthasaradhi Misra.

Madhava Saraswathi was the author of *Sarvadarsana Kaumidi*. He has also quoted Umbeka and said that Umbeka wrote an elaborate commentary of 'slokavartika' of Kumarila Bhatta.

There is an interesting sloka current in the country referring to Umbeka.

उम्बेकः कारिको वेत्ति तन्त्रं वेत्ति प्रभाकरः ।
मण्डनास्तूमयं वेत्ति नोभयं वेत्ति रेवणः ॥

Almost an identical sloka with a slight difference in reading has been quoted by Haribhadra (author of *Shaddarsana Samuchaya*). From the above it is clear that Umbeka was the author of a commentary on *slokavartika* of Kumarila Bhatta. *Sloka vartika* is known as *Karika*. *Tantra Vartika* of Kumarila Bhatta is also known as *Tantram*.

Kumarila Bhatta wrote five works, *Slokavartika*, *Tantravartika*, *Tuptika*, *Brihattika*, and *Madhya Vartika*. Mandana Misra his disciple, who subsequently became Sanyasi wrote *Vidhiviveka*, *Bhavanaviveka*, and *Vibhrama Viveka* and a gloss on *Sabara Bhashya*.

As has been pointed out, Mandana Misra author of *Brahma Siddhi* and *Sphota Siddhi* is different from Mandana Misra who became a Sankara Sanyasi subsequently. The grand commentaries that stand in the name of Sri Sureswara Acharya and Viswarupa Acharya still hold their day in elucidating the terse lines of Sri *Bhagavatpada's Bhashya*.

The Sloka vartika of Kumarila Bhatta is a great work of 31,000 slokas extending over Tarkapada of Mimamsa. Examining the commentary by Umbeka on this, it is found that it stopped with 20000 slokas. Later the commentary of Umbeka was continued by Jaya Misra who is called Bhattaputra being the son of Kumarila Bhatta. This work of Umbeka starts with a memorable sloka which is also found in Malati Madhava.

ये नाम केचिदिह नः प्रनयन्त्यवज्ञां
जानन्तु ते किमपि तान् प्रतिनैषयन्तः ।
उत्पत्स्यते मम तु कोपि समान धर्मा
कालो ह्ययं निरवधिर्विपुला च पृथ्वी ॥

It is very clear that Umbeka is most likely identical with Bhavabhuti. Scholars are of opinion that this same person is Mandana Misra who became Sanyasi after a discussion with Sankara. There is no doubt that Umbeka, Mandana Misra, and Bhavabhuti - all of them are pupils of Kumarila Bhatta. About Bhavabhuti being a disciple of Kumarila Bhatta, Dr. S. Radha Krishnan has also agreed. (Indian Philosophy Vol. 2 Page 377)

In the above sloka, Umbeka perhaps expressed a feeling that his commentary had to confront a good lot of opposition from not only Mimamsa Scholars like Prabhakara and Murari but also Advaita Scholars.

The commentary of Umbeka stopped at Vanavada. Jaya Misra, the son of Kumarila Bhatta however continued the commentary. The writing of Jaya Misra is full of overtones and vigorously points out the opponent whom he had in mind.

The reason why Umbeka stopped the commentary in the middle is not easily forthcoming. Readers of Sanskrit literature are aware that the "Mahavira Charita" in the name of Bhavabhuti is also incomplete and it was abandoned in the middle.

Instances are not lacking to show such abandonment. Many great poets in the Sanskrit language were carried away by the God of Death while they were still holding the quill in their hands.

Bana, Dandi, Panditaraya and perhaps Kalidasa passed away while still giving the finish to the best of their writings.

It is doubtful whether the Umbeka commentary on Sloka-vartika was abandoned as he was also a victim of death. In such an event Jaya Mitra would have spoken of it.

Scholars are led to believe that Umbeka was the Mimamsa scholar disciple of Kumarila Bhatta referred to with a respectful epithet -Mandana Misra-who was converted by Sri Bhagavatpada into an Advaita Sanyasi. With a new Ashrama life, and a new doctrine i.e., Sankara Advaita to propagate, Umbeka must have necessarily abandoned the Slokavartika commentary as also the Mahavira Charita Kavya. His labours in Poorva Mimamsa came to an end with his conversion into Advaita. This spiritual transformation brought an end to all his activities of previous Ashrama.

It may thus be seen that some evidence is available to identify Bhābhūti with Umbeka, Sureswara, Viswarupa, and Mandana Misra, (the pupil of Kumarila Bhatta vanquished in a disputation with Sri Bhagavatpada). But the evidence is not strong enough to make a final conclusion. There are still some difficulties which require careful investigation. This evidence is however strong enough to lead to vistas that invite further exploration.



(PART FOUR)

THE REVELATIONS OF HISTORY :

Kasi Lakshmana Sastry was a talented Sanskrit poet patronised by Sri Jagadguru Satchidananda Bharati Swami (III) the Sringeri Pontiff between 1705-71. Under the instructions of the Jagadguru, Lakshmana Sastry composed a Sanskrit Kavya in 19 cantos, "Guruvamsa Kavya" describing the historical anecdotes of Sringeri Sarada Pitha upto A. D. 1725-27. This book treats Mandana Misra Viswarupa Sureswaracharya - and Mandana Misra author of Brahma Siddhi as two different persons. Some modern scholars support this point of view.

The only book that looks like identifying the two Mandana Misras as one and the same person is, Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya.

Kasivilasa Kriyasakti was a Kashmiri Saivaite Scholar of eminence. He came under the influence of Sri Vidyaranya and became an Advaiti and a great upanishadic scholar. He was the author of "Saivagama sara Sangraha" an essence of Samhitas Puranas and Vedas. He was favoured with Sanyasa by Sri Vidyaranya and was named VidyaSamkara after his parama guru. He appears to have passed away in 1388.

Madhava Mantri (Veera Vasantha Madhava) also called Madarasa Udeyar son of Chavunda and Machambika (of Angirasa Gotra) was a minister of Bukka Raya II. He was an eminent scholar and wrote Tatparyadipika an authoritative commentary on Sutasamhita. This Madhava Mantri was a capable general having conquered the west coast. He cleared 'Goa' of 'Turushkas'. He was for some time the governor of Banavase.

The authorship of Madhaviya Sankara Vijaya is attributed to this Madhava Mantri-the disciple of Kasivilasa Kriyasakti Vidya-samkara. He was a junior contemporary to Sri Vidyaranya and Sri Bharati Tirtha. On behalf of the Vijanagara emperor Bukka, he visited Sringeri to pay respects to Sri Bharati Tirtha and to place the imperial grants in person at the feet of the Jagadguru.

In the Madhaviya Samkara Vijaya - the description of places all over India was rather casual while the west coast of India was described with gusto and lot of personal knowledge and attachment.

The arguments of scholars who make distinction between the two Mandana Misras are very many. But those who hold the two persons as one and the same are not without arguments.

The large part of Brahma Siddhi of Mandana Misra was devoted to refute the theories of Prabhakara Bhatta - the Poorva Mimamsa commentator - whose school is called Prabhakara mata.

But curiously enough, Sri Sureswara Acharya in his Sambhandha Vartika has reproduced the text of Brahma Siddhi with additional arguments here and there. These additional arguments were aimed at Salikanatha whose 'Ajuvimala' and 'Prakarana Panchika' - raised some objections, against Brahma-siddhi. These objections were met by Sri Sureswara Acharya. Some verses of Brahma siddhi are reproduced in the Vartika in the same order. This adaption of Brahmasiddhi in the Vartika is remarked as not creditable to the Scholarship of Vartikakara if the two authors are not identical.

Bhavabhuti occupies a place in the front rank of Sanskrit poets next only to Kalidasa. From the texts of the three Sanskrit dramas (Uttara Ramacharita, Mahavira charita, Malati Madhava) whose authorship is attributed to him, it may be concluded that he belonged to Yajurveda branch, that the name of his father was Neelakantha, that the name of his mother was Jatukarni.

His sanskrit dramas appear to have been put on boards in the Mandir of Mahakala of Ujjain. There is a strong feeling that Bhavabhuti was a contemporary to Yasowarma of Kanyakubja. This Yasowarma was defeated by Lalitaditya of Kashmir (725-761).

Bhavabhuti has a title "Srikantha". This title or epithet "Srikantha" means that he perhaps belongs to a separate saiva sect whose seat lay at the famous Srisailla.

There is no evidence, historical, literary or otherwise to identify Bhavabhuti with Srikantha - author of Brahma Sutra Bhasya in support of Siva Advaita of Pasupata Saiva sect. This Srikantha - author of Bhashya - was a disciple of Sweta. Haradatta Sivacharya - the author of 'Sruti Sookti Mala' also wrote a commentary on the Bhashya of Srikantha. Haradatta Sivacharya was supposed to be of the 11th century A. D. Kshemaraja, the author of several books on Kashmir Saiva (Pratyabhigna School) claimed that he was a disciple of Abhinava Guptapada. Kshemaraja who lived in the 11th century (1030 AD) also quoted some lines from Srikantha Bhashya in his Commentary (Pratyabhigna Hridaya) on Pratyabhigna Vimarsiki of Abhinava guptapada.

Sridhara (991 AD) in his Nyaya Kundali (a commentator on Padardha Dharma sangraha of Prasastapada the famous Vaisesika Scholar) also quoted lines from Srikantha Bhashya. In the circumstances it is clear that Srikantha Bhashya cannot be later than 900 AD.

The famous South 'Indian Scholar' Appaya Dikshita (1550-1622) wrote a commentary called "Sivarka mani deepika" on the Bhashya of Srikantha. Appayya Dikshita was also of opinion that Srikantha was earlier to Ramanuja (1019-1139).

Srikantha borrowed "Puccha brahma Vada" from Sri Bhagavatpada. And in many respects Srikantha Bhashya formed the guidelines to Sri Bhashya of Ramanuja.

This Bhashyakarta Srikantha was the son of Gowridevi and Vlsvaradhyha. His wife was Sarvamangala. He had four sons Someswara, Aghoranatha, Kaleswara and Srigiri. He had several disciples of whom Haradatta, Somasekhara, Bhavadeva, and Bheemeswara were foremost. He was of Bharadwaja Gotra.

The Srikantha School of philosophy is Sivadvaita which stands for all that is sublime in Saiva cult. Religiously it is a monotheistic cult and philosophically it is uncompromising realism, taking up a stand which is midway between monism and pluralism. Although it is biased towards Advaita, just like the

Kashmir Saiva Cult (pratyabhigna School) these two Saivite Cults are distinctly separate.

The Kashmir Saiva cult is a spiritual philosophy because its doctrines regarding Reality, the world, and the man are derived from a wealth of spiritual experiences, and they are not built upon an analysis of the ordinary experience of man. In short it is a rational exposition of a view of reality obtained primarily through more than normal experience.

With these details known about Srikantha, he cannot be identified with Bhavabhuti - Sri Sureswaracharya - Mandana Misra.

Sri Sureswara Acharya followed the Sankara Bhagavatpada doctrine which is only for the strong hearted, who can follow the logic dauntlessly and face conclusions however subversive of ordinary ideas of reality and value.

One among the first batch of persons to be influenced by the doctrine of Sri Bhagavatpada - was Sri Sureswara Acharya. And it has exerted the greatest influence on Indian life ever since. This influence still persists abundantly in all parts of India.

The onslaughts and attacks of not only doctrines of foreign origin but also of the doctrines of Ramanuja, Madhwa, Nimbarka, Vallabha, Bhaskara, Yadava and others could not reduce its influence. It still stands in the history of human thought as the most consistent system of monism. It is all because the Advaita School is the natural and legitimate interpretation of the philosophy of the upanishads.

To show that the two persons Sri Sureswara Acharya Mandana Misra and Brahma Sidhi author Mandana Misra are different, scholars give many arguments. Some of the arguments are (1) that in a commentary on Samkshepa Sariraka, the doctrine of Mandana in Brahma Sidhi was condemned and that of Sri Sureswara Acharya was accepted (2) that Vidya Sagera the author of Tikaratna (a commentary on Panchapadika) contrasts the two schools - one of Brahma Sidhi Mandana (which is supported by Vachaspati Misra) and the other of Vimuktatman

who followed Sri Sureswara Acharya (3) that a commentator of Naishkarma Sidhi (of Sri Sureswara Acharya) while dealing with aparoksha gnana criticised the school of Brahma Sidhi Mandana Misra (which received the support of Vachaspati Misra) and he considered it dull and worthless. He quoted verses from chapter 4 of Brahma Sidhi (4) that Brahma Sidhi Mandana Misra holds to the Gnana Karma Samucchaya theory while on the other hand Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada and Sri Sureswara Acharya discord Karma completely (5) that Brahma Sidhi Mandana upholds the theory of sphota along with the School of Bhartrihari, but Sri Sureswara Acharya with both the Poorva Mimamsa Schools did not accept it (6) that Vachaspati Misra, the strong advocate of the Brahma Sidhi Mandana Misra School, has not condescended to comment upon the works of Sri Sureswara Acharya. Vachaspati Misra was stated to be later to Sri Sureswara Acharya according to Anandagiri. Vachaspati Misra was among Trayyanta Nishnatas. He differed with Brahma Sidhi Mandana in sphota Sidhi, and wrote his own work instead of amplifying the Brahma Sidhi Mandana's sphota Sidhi. (7) Sri Prakasatma yati in his works (Vivarana, Sabdanirnaya) supported Sri Sureswara Acharya while condemning the Brahma Siddhi of Mandana Misra (8) Ananda Bodha in his work "Nyaya Makaranda" has quoted verses from Brahma Sidhi with which he agreed. At certain other places he also quoted Sri Sureswara Acharya in support of his own theories. But he held that Brahma Sidhi Mandana Misra and Sri Sureswara Acharya as two different persons. Ananda Bodha lived in 12th century AD (9) In Nyayaratna Deepavali of Anandanubhava (in the context of Sanyasa) it has been clearly stated that Sri Sureswara Acharya is different from Brahma Sidhi Mandana. This Nyayaratna Deepavali of Anandanubhava is different from Nyaya deepavali of Ananda Bodha. Anandagiri wrote a commentary on Nyaya Deepavali. Ananda Bodha and Anandanubhava are different persons. Ananda Bodha (12 th century) was a disciple of Atmavasa. The well known Chitsukhacharya also wrote commentaries on the works of Ananda Bodha. Anandanubhava was the disciple of Narayana Jyotisha Pujya Pada. He is also different from Anandaranya. Gnanamrit was a disciple of Anandaranya.

Such arguments can be easily multiplied by making comparative study of the theories of Brahma Sidhi and Naishkarma Sidhi.

Mahamahopadhyaya Jnanothama Misra, a native of Mangalam Village in the Chola country, wrote a commentary on Naishkarma Sidhi. The Sankshepa Sariraka of Sarvagnatma owes much to Naishkarma Sidhi.



(PART FIVE)

THE GLOW OF THE FLOWING TRADITION

The idea of the 'holy' --'Sacrum' - as it may be called is always a prevailing factor in Hinduism. This sense of holiness or Sacrum is natural and a reality in experience. It is not proper to call it supernatural except that it is sacred and not profane.

The sacred remains of Sri Sureswara Acharya, were interred at Sringeri on the Tunga banks in a small structure on the south east corner of the Sarada Temple. The great works of Sri Sureswara Acharya acquired unquestionable importance in the development of the Advaitic tradition in the post SamKara era. They secured a permanent and everlasting place in the history of philosophical thought and won him an eminent place, gratitude and esteem in the hearts of all seekers of truth.

Sri Sureswara Acharya like his preceptor Sri Bhagavatpada- was a prolific writer, literary critic of great merit, guardian angel of Dharma, a thinker, philosopher, and preceptor of Advaita, seer and yogi—with a luminous personality in each of these fields, each of which calls for a full fledged biography on its own.

As a guardian angel of Dharma making the path of Dharma easily understandable to the commonest of the Society, he wrote a compendious commentary on Smriti (Dharma Sastra) which became famous as Balakrida. As a creative literary critic he wrote the Monasollasa commentary on the Dakshinamoorti Stotra of Sri Bhagavatpada and showed how a great poet will ride on the wings of an elemental spirituality. As a prolific writer he hymned the fields of glory of the ineffective, ineluctable and functionless state of Law of Karma in his great prakarana Grandha Naishkarmasidhi. As a philosopher he interpreted the vision of Advaita in terms of sweet reasoning and convincing logic in the vartikas. As a seer he fronted reality. As a yogi

he handed over to his illustrious line of successors a multiform technique each form by itself an easy method - to achieve the desired change in consciousness.

This apart, he created the wonderful technique of governing the throne of transcendental wisdom - Vyakhyana Simhasana - by which the succeeding pontiffs guided the affairs with a rare dexterity and great spiritual dignity, without themselves identifying with the Peetha because such an identification leads either to self pity, self glory, or to a cozy patronising self satisfaction which ends in arrogance and imperviousness. These successors gave their full sympathy to the world around, guided the affairs of the peetha - but at the same time standing aside contemplating. They loved the humanity more and therefore there was no self glorification - not loving themselves more.

Sri Nityabhodhaghana Acharya, the successor of Sri Sureswara Acharya on the Sringeri Sarada Peetha - installed a Siva linga on the mortal remains of Sri Sureswara Acharya. The Mahalinga is being worshipped daily ever since.

Sri Nityabhodhaghana Acharya "was like a fascinating cloud resting on the lofty mountain summit of self realisation. As the roar of lion drives away elephants, his dialectics dispelled opponents. Like the life giving showers from a cloud, his teachings fertilised the minds of his disciples". This was the description of the Acharya of his disciple Sri Gnanaghana Acharya given in the invocatory verse of his work Tattvasiddhi.

व्याख्या गर्जितनिर्जिता जडधियः कण्ठीरवाशङ्कया
तर्कारण्य निषण्णवादि करिणो निः श्रेयसाद्रौ स्थितिः ।
विद्यावृष्टिसुषुप्तकशिष्ययतिसस्यैः क्षमा शोभते
शश्वद्वोधवनस्य यस्य गुरवे तस्मै नमः श्रेयसे ॥

Sri Nityabhodhaghana Acharya has continued the tradition of conducting daily worship and leading the disciples to the path of righteousness. The disciples were benefited by the lustre of his exalted mood of blissfulness.

(निनाथ सद्धर्मपथं स्वानु भवं प्रकाशयन्)

Sri Nityabhodhaghana Acharya was succeeded by Sri Jnanaghana Acharya as the Peethadhipati. The Tattavasudhi of this Acharya later inspired further development of Advaita tradition. The successor to him was Sri Jnanotmasiva Acharya, the author of a commentary on Brahmasutras. Its name is 'Vidya Sri'. Two of his disciples became very famous on account of their great contribution to the Advaita thought.

One of them was Vignanasrama or Vignanatma-whose works, the Tattparadyoti and Narayana Upanishadic Vritti secured a firm place for his scholarship.

Chitsuka Acharya of Simhachalam was another disciple well-known for his Tattvapradipika, Bhavadyotanika, Bhavaprakasika, Adikaranamanjari, Adhikarana Sangati and several other standard works on Advaita.

After Sri Jnanottama Sivacharya, came Sri Jnanagiri Acharya, Sri Simhagiri Acharya, Sri Iswara Thirtha Acharya, Sri Nrishimha Thirtha Acharya in succession to the Sarada Peetha.

Then came Sri Vidya Samkara Thirtha Acharya, a contemporary to Sri Madhwa Acharya, the propagator of dwaita school.

Sri Vidya Samkara Thirtha Acharya was followed by Sri Bharathi Krishna Thirtha Acharya and Sri Vidyaranya Acharya the builder of Vijayanagar empire.

Sri Vidyaranya Acharya was the twelfth Acharya on the Sarada Peetha counted from Sri Bhagavatpada.

In post Sankara Bhagavatpada period, several different schools of interpretation of Advaita have developed. The main schools of interpretation are (1) Sri Sureswara Acharya's Naishkarma Sidhi School (2) Sri Padmapada's Panchapadika School, (3) Brahma Sidhi School of Mandana Misra and (4) Bhamati School of Vachaspati Misra. But broadly speaking these four Schools are generally clubbed to make only two distinct Schools of Interpretation.

Vachaspati Misra (9th century AD) author of 'Bhamati' a sub commentary on the Sutra Bhashya of Sri Bhagavatpada is the leader of one of the schools. The other school is associated with Prakasatma (about 1200 AD) author of "Vivarana" a commentary on 'Panchapadika' of Sri Padmapada. The 'Vivarana' school adopted several points from 'Tatva Sudhi' of Sri Jagadguru Jnanaghana Acharya, the successor of Sri Jagadguru Nityabodhaghana Acharya (successor to Sri Sureswara Acharya) on the Sringeri Sarada Pitha. 'Tatva Sudhi' owes much to Naishkarma Sidhi of Sri Sureswara Acharya.

A few of the important points of difference between the two schools can be mentioned (1) The Vivarana school believes that Upanishadic sentences lead to Brahma Gnana while in the other school it is deep meditation of the essence of the Upanishad sentences. (2) The Vivarana school believes that 'Maya Sabalita Brahma' is the material (upadana) cause of the universe while the other school holds 'Jiva Agnana' as the material cause. (3) In the interpretation of relationship between Jiva and Iswara (image and object) the Vivarana school holds that the image is in Avidya while the other school holds that Jiva is the chaitanya on which Avidya depends and that Iswara is the Chaitanya which is the subject matter (विषयीभूत) for Avidya.

Sri Vidyaranya in his "Vivarana Prameya Sangraha" elucidated the Vivarana school. But in his 'Panchadasi' propagated a new school which is supposed to represent Naishkarma Sidhi view point in toto.

The main differences relate to the definitions of the words 'Maya'— difference between Maya and Avidya, difference between Jiva and Iswara and about Adhyasa.

The generation which in its younger days has worshipped the holy lotus feet of the thirty second Pontiff of Sringeri (Sri Jagadguru Narasimha Bharati) has faded into the past. This Jagadguru was on the Pitha for sixty two years (1817—1879). He was generally called "Ugra Narasimha Bharati" because the lustre

on his face was so dazzling. It is said that he conquered hunger and sleep and spent the whole day in deep meditation.

The cumulative effect of years of meditative devotion, and purity in all aspects of life - was that he became an embodiment of spiritual animation and moral strength. Sri Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj received Sanyasa Diksha at Sringeri as a grace of this Jagadguru.

The British commissioners at Bangalore (put incharge of the Mysore Kingdom by the Governor General Bentinck) paid very high tributes to the scholarly and spiritual eminence of the Jagadguru. Mark Cubbon and Bowring were the most ardent of the British commissioners who went to bow before Sri Jagadguru Narasimha Bharati Mahaswami.

When the Jagadguru paid a visit to Hyderabad, the Nizam paid wholesome respects to the "most holy personage who could dispense blessings from where he stayed, but in the fulness of his grace had condescended to tour the kingdom of Hyderabad".

The Jagadguru toured extensively and during one of his tours in the Southern part of the Maharashtra, a band of thugs came to the camp of the Jagadguru at night with an intention to plunder. But on looking at the dazzling spiritual lustre of the Jagadguru, they became dazed, fell prostrate before him, and became his disciples. They also became the self appointed military retinue of the Jagadguru till his camp moved out of the jungles of the Maharashtra country.

Sri Jagadguru Satchidananda Sivabhinava Narasimha Bharati Mahaswami (1879-1912) the thirty-third pontiff on the Sringeri Pitha was considered as an avatar of Sri Sankara. Charles Johnston wrote of him "He is a man of the highest character, a magnetic personality, a fine Sanskrit scholar, and a perfect master of the intricacies of the Vedanta Philosophy". Mr. Fraser, the tutor Mysore princes, gratefully acknowledged that his conversation with the Jagadguru had lifted his soul above life's turmoil.

This Jagadguru took to Sanyasa Ashrama in his 9th year (1865) and became the Pithadhipati fourteen years later. On the night of the day of his initiation into Sanyasa (9th year) he was heard repeating in sleep "Sarwoham, Sarvoham". It was indicative of his spiritual maturity even at that early age of nine years.

The Sankara Jayanti festival observation was started by him and it has since come to occupy an honoured place in the National calendar. For us, he discovered the place of birth of Adi Sankara at Kalady, the place of cremation of the body of his mother and other places associated with the life of Sankara at Kalady. He commemorated the event by building temples to Sankara and Sri Sarada Devi at Kalady—which since became a place of pilgrimage to the religious minded. His disciples of whom some are still happily with us speak in glowing terms of "his regal and majestic learning, penetrating intellect, divine vision, overflowing mercy, captivating smile persuasive speech, deep piety Yogic powers, child like simplicity, erudite scholarship and extra-ordinary poetic skill."

Some of his disciples became Sidha Purushas. Sri Jagadguru Bharati Krishna Tirtha, head of the Puri Govardhana Math (formerly Sri Venkata Raman) Sidha Ramananda Saraswati (formerly Sri K. Ramachandra Iyar) Vallimalai Sidha Satchidananda (formerly Arthamari) were some of his famous disciples. Max Mueller, the famous German orientalist applied for his blessings.

Sri Jagadguru Chandra Sekhara Bharati Mahaswami, the thirty fourth pontiff came to the Pitha in 1912 when he was nineteen years of age. His predecessor prayed to Sarada Devi to make his disciple this Jagadguru (then Sri Narasimha Sastry) - a Sarvagna, poly histor. This prayer was amply fulfilled because Sri Jagadguru Chandra Sekhara Bharati Mahaswami became the greatest of the scholars of his times. He conquered the hearts of all those that came to him. It was peace benevolence and grace all round him. He was childlike always beaming with an effectively charming smile. Those that came for his darsan felt

the presence of God. With ease, simplicity and homely examples he explained complex philosophical topics leaving a lasting impression on the minds of the listeners.

Most part of his life was spent in seclusion, meditation and lost in Samadhi. A mere repetition of the names of the Divine Mother would take him into a trance lasting for months on occasions. Sometime during the early days of his Pontificate, he had a vision of the Divine Mother when he went to Her shrine to worship. This vision never faded away but always remained before him.

It is on record that by a mere glance he cured many incurable ailments. He was boundless in his mercy.

His scholarship in Tarka, Mimamsa, Vedanta and other traditional branches of learning was great and unrivalled. He wrote charming Sanskrit poetry of great merit and a fine prose commentary on Viveka Chudamani. He was a great Yogi par excellence.

He was a Jivanmukta to whom death was but an illusion. On the fateful day - 26th September 1954 - (Mahalaya) before day break - he walked over the rushing flood waters of the River Tunga - and seated in Padmasana, he cast away the mortal body and the swift waters closed over it.

A good many of the olders of the present generation who had the fortune of having seen him recollect his presence as a remarkable spiritual phenomenon quiet and insiduously overwhelming. Recollecting his kind words to the disciples, it may be said that they heard not only his words but also his mind.

Then Sri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha Mahaswami became the Pithadhipati.

This Jagadguru has remained essentially a very simple person easy of approach to everybody, through his extensive tours to all corners of India - his miraculous charm which attracts every body; and the great spiritual upheaval caused on account of his tours

have placed him at the top of the spiritual list of Modern India. The Jagadguru is characteristically humble and speaks with equal characteristic generosity to everybody that comes to see him. While with him, we are in contact with true erudition. With ease and aptness, the work and thought of such varied saints, scholars and builders of spiritual empires as Sri Bhagavatpada, Sri Sureswara Acharaya, Sri Vidya thirtha, Sri Vidyaranya and Sri Chandra Sekhara Bharati Mahaswami - are brought into the flow of conversation. In all it is a refreshing, life enhancing experience.

Laid out by Sri Bhagavatpada, the area covered by the temples of Sarada Peetha at Sringeri - on the banks of the River Tunga - is one of the loveliest sights in Malnad. This twelve hundred years old beauty spot has not lost its charm.

With the green hills all around, Sringeri - is encircled by a natural high wall which gives it an exclusive air. The meandering Tunga River with its musical whispers and a riot of colour and greenery around - present a fascinating experience. The Sandalwood trees on the far off hills and the bushes sprouting red blue and yellow flowers emit a wonderful fragrance.

The reflections of the stately temples in the waters of the Tunga make a duplication of beauty.

Sringeri Sarada Peetha - the source of inspiration to the great Vijayanagar empire - became a cradle of arts, literature, spiritual thought and religion. The picturesque natural beauty, the river, the mountains and the jungles around - have contributed to make Sringeri a cherished land of immense cultural and spiritual activity with a matching background of natural beauty.

Sringeri is the seat of several temples - particularly the Vidya-sankara temple, a beauty in stone. It combines the best of Hoysala Vijayanagara and Dravidian styles of temple architecture. It is impossible to describe the exquisite finish of the Rasi pillars of the interior of this temple.

This temple, and most other temples of Sringeri are located on the banks of the River Tunga - very near the spot where Sri

Bhagavatpada saw a serpent King protecting a labouring frog from the hot sun by spreading its hood.

The language of the Jagadguru has no limits of a social structure. His language of the historicity of man's spiritual thought springs from a seat of spiritual eminence - which gives a great value to the individual, his freedom, and his sense of responsibility within a frame work which accepts the concept of a natural law of human rights - with every individual his role in the eternal play.

His conduct does not annoy anybody but he behaves like an ideal citizen and is a friend of all. Outwardly he is very busy but at heart very calm and quiet.

He rests unagitated in the supreme bliss. His life - a saga of liberation - is really the noblest and happiest. From him goodness is scattered all around.

Having seen him, having heard him, having met him, having remembered him, all people feel delighted.

The Jagadguru - every inch a saint - is still very much a part of this world. He is dedicated to the fulfilment of Dharma. His approach transcends the socially and personally discreditable emotions of envy, greed, and hate. It believes in the redemptive possibilities of man. The message of the Jagadguru to this generation is "to preserve the past and prepare for the future".

The Jagadguru found that the structure on the mortal remains of Sri Sureswara Acharaya was too simple and placid. He got a new structure built in the place of the old. The design of this new structure is austere, simple, severe, relieved by the magical delicacy of an ornamentation which is gracious and full of subtle charm. The lovely vimana, like a pure white lily bud, is not marred by modern patterns.

It is in the south east foreyard of the Saradamba Temple like a diamond dropped from the treasure of Sri Sarada devi and the Vimana flockless flashing back to the light like a gem in a necklace.

The new structure looks like a fountain of mercy that has gushed from the earth. It is a little structure of grace and dignity. The austerity of the structure is in keeping with the life of the great Acharya whose mortal remains lie buried underneath.

A wandering breeze - fresh from the near by slipping river-ruffles the flower plants in the opposite garden.

The open verandah of the structure has beautifully sculptured pillars reminiscent of the Vijayanagara style of temple architecture. They are admirable in their massive grace. In short, this new structure is artistic, remarkable, and wholesome.

The Hindu faith, the Vedic Dharma, and the tradition of Hindu philosophy are vital and undecaying - and they find new heights, new depths and new stimulation in every new era or age that passes.

Many modern leaders of thought and society - (not necessarily social reformers and poets like Rama Mohan Roy and Rabindranath Tagore - but practical politicians like Tilak and Gandhi) have derived a great inspiration from the classical Hinduism. Much of their dynamism is undoubtedly due to their faith in Hinduism and its inspiration.

The economic philosophy of life which owes much of its existence to the materialist Marxist theories, is no doubt exceptional in respect of economic motives and social and political developments. But inspite of the vital importance of material conditions of society for its progress, they are not the be all and end all of everything. The Marxist theory cannot even explain some of the objective and subjective quests of reason-not to speak of metaphysical urges. The progress and well being of the society is not a simple function depending upon its wealth of economic development. It is historical knowledge that many civilisations have wrecked themselves while they were at the height of their economic prosperity.

The problem of the purpose of human existence is the crux of all philosophy. The Sarada Pitha and the lives of the great saints that adorned the Peetha so far is a visible explanation of the problem. A knowledge of the Saga of the Sringeri Pitha makes a man apply his intelligence to give a shape to his own life i. e. a kind of spiritual orientation.

The ebbs and flow of creative vitality in a nation cannot be understood only with the aid of mere economic or material principles. The Sringeri Sarada Peetha is the source of spiritual inspiration all these twelve hundred years. Even by 'just being there', it helps the spiritual seeker a good deal and really it has been and is a permanent school of spiritual thinking. The Sarada Peetha became an outpost of retreat from the modern chaos. The unbroken succession on the Pitha is representing the eternal in man by the sublime of the present. Bhagavatpada disappeared from the cave of Dattatreya near Kedaranath in the Himalayas. He did not leave any mortal remains behind him to be worshipped by his followers. The remains of his first disciple Sri Sureswara Acharya are fortunately available. They are now enshrined in the new temple.

The writings of Sri Sureswara Acharya, imbued with the trust in man and optimism to lift the spirit of man, are a source of joy to us to this day. Through his writings, we behold a sage, as if in dreams, whose wisdom only years could teach.

The great name and the halo of Sri Sureswara Acharya continue to inspire and stimulate the spiritual thought. His name will continue to guide the spiritual minded as long as the Upanishads, the flowers of the Veda, last - as long as the Upanishadic thought is cherished and followed in the world - as long as people remember, respect, and follow Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada, the noblest flower of human wisdom and spiritual thought and as long as the Indian race and the characters of its heroic and chaste women are sung and praised in this world.

His teaching, as that of his Master, is ageless and ever fresh. It is still and always will be the guiding factor that counsels the ruling pontiff of Sringeri Sarada Pitha in his work of piloting the ship of spirituality.

Sri Sureswara Acharya like Sri Bhagavatpada was born of a long and living religious tradition. They provided ample example and precedent for the man who would project his particular philosophy and faith upon a world canvas. They bequeathed to humanity visions and ideals of spiritual life which are as true and timely as when they pronounced, with ageless grace on the shores of time.

भगवत्पादपादाब्जद्वन्द्वं द्वन्द्वनिबर्हणम् ।
सुरेश्वरादिसद्भृङ्गैरवलम्बितमाभजे ॥
विश्वं मायामयत्वेन रूपितं यत्प्रबोधतः ।
विश्वं च यत्स्वरूपं तं वार्तिकाचार्यमाश्रये ॥

ओं शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥



